



**DIRECTOR OF THE ANNUAL FUND**  
**[DENISON UNIVERSITY](#)**  
**Granville, Ohio**



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Denison University in the search for a Director of the Annual Fund.

The Director of the Annual Fund will design and implement a comprehensive solicitation strategy utilizing advanced technologies, targeted segmentation, and data analysis to enhance revenue for both restricted and unrestricted giving for the University while expanding the rate of alumni participation. The Director will manage all annual giving staff, volunteers, and activities.

Denison University was founded in 1831 as the Granville Literary and Theological Institution and renamed Denison University in the mid-19850s. Denison is one of the earliest colleges to be established beyond the Allegheny Mountains and north of the Ohio River. Founded by ambitious frontier people who were determined to nurture leadership for the nation, its focus on preparing effective leaders and active citizens remains an essential part of Denison's mission today. The University is one of the nation's leading liberal arts colleges with a vibrant, residential community of 2,300 undergraduate students and a student to faculty ratio of 9:1, ensuring that students are more than a number, and that they become active participants in their own educational experience. The University offers 65 academic programs and four pre-professional programs that lead to three undergraduate degrees. Denison University fields 26 athletic teams that compete at the NCAA Division III level in the North Coast Athletic Conference. Denison's extracurricular options for students include more than 160 student organizations that provide over 600 opportunities for campus leadership. These opportunities are provided on a pedestrian-friendly campus designed by pioneering landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. The more than 900-acre campus features the 250-acre hilltop section, a 350-acre Biological Reserve, and historic Denison Golf Club. With an endowment of \$1.1 billion, Denison commits over \$70 million towards student financial aid each year in the form of need-based and merit-based scholarships. Success for Denison students continues after graduation with 92 percent of graduates employed, in graduate school, or completing service within six months of graduation. Ninety six percent of Denison's 28,000 alumni are working in their desired field or position, or on their way to achieving their professional goals.

Denison University promotes active learning to deliver on its mission to inspire and educate students to become autonomous thinkers, discerning moral agents, and active citizens of a democratic society. It provides a curriculum that balances breadth with depth, building academic specialization upon a liberal arts foundation in the arts, sciences, social sciences, and humanities. A Denison education is more than what happens in the classroom. The focus of student life is on the whole person, providing a living-learning environment sensitive to the individual needs yet grounded in a concern for community.

Denison University is nationally recognized for the value of its prestigious academic programs and for its welcoming community. *Business Insider* has ranked Denison #43 in “Smartest Liberal Arts Colleges in America” by analyzing average standardized test scores. In its lists of “America’s Top Colleges” and “America’s Most Entrepreneurial Colleges,” *Forbes* lists Denison among the very best. Denison is among the top 50 best value liberal arts colleges according to *Kiplinger’s* and is ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the *New York Times* most economically diverse top colleges. *Washington Monthly* focuses on what colleges are doing in response to social inequalities and ranks Denison high for social mobility. The University also ranks high for undergraduate service community hours, as well as postgraduate service opportunities with Peace Corps, Teach for America, and City Year.

### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Director of the Annual Fund will report to the Campaign Manager and Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Billie Handa. The Director will oversee a team currently comprised of six staff with the opportunity for growth in advance of the next campaign. Current staff include the Assistant Director, Annual Fund; Assistant Director, Annual Fund Direct Marketing; Associate Director of Leadership Gifts; Associate Director, Campus Philanthropic Programs; Associate Director of Reunion Giving; and Assistant to the Director of the Annual Fund.

### **FROM THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT**

*I am proud to welcome you to Denison University, an institution which fosters self-determination and demonstrates the transformative power of education. We envision our students' lives as based upon rational choice, a firm belief in human dignity and compassion unlimited by cultural, racial, sexual, religious, or economic barriers, and directed toward an engagement with the central issues of our time.*

*I am excited to launch the search for our next Director of the Annual Fund who will lead, develop, and manage a robust multi-channel annual fund program and talented, engaged professional staff. I seek a colleague who will utilize both qualitative and quantitative analysis to make strategic decisions, communicate effectively with diverse audiences, and maintain an innovative spirit to create new and unique activities to even better engage with our alumni.*

*Each year, our annual fund efforts result in over \$7 million in operating support. As we enter our next comprehensive campaign, we look to grow that revenue to over \$10 million each year. As a sign of commitment, Denison will be identifying and incorporating goals focused on alumni engagement and the alumni giving participation rate into the campaign. This will necessitate creative collaboration, testing opportunities, and community cooperation throughout the Institutional Advancement Division and the broader campus community. In addition to the partnership of University leadership, the Director will benefit from the support, engagement, and strategic vision of the Board of Trustees.*

*If you are looking for a challenging professional opportunity that will provide new skills, experiences, and knowledge, I encourage you to look further into this role. Employees of Denison are passionate about leadership, creativity, and taking risks within a supportive and collaborative team environment. I look forward to welcoming a partner who is experienced, eager to innovate, interested in mentorship— both providing and receiving it—and who believes in the power of a liberal arts education.*

—Billie Handa, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement

## **DENISON UNIVERSITY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ANTI-RACISM**

Denison University is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism for its students, and for its employees and it is striving to be better and more accountable for its efforts. The University has embarked on a journey of candid and critical self-reflection, taking a deeper look into the role it can and should play in correcting the country's long and painful history of racism. This begins at home with a recognition of Denison's achievements in diversity, equity, and inclusion and acknowledgment of the places where it has fallen short. A college campus should be a supportive space in which to confront the past, delve into the structures that shape contemporary society, and find ways to work together to create a better future. Institutions like Denison, steeped in the values of fairness and equality, carry the responsibility and privilege of spreading positive change throughout society.

[Denison Forward](#) is the University's commitment to changing the way it thinks and acts—and to spark, nurture, and demand that change in society as well. Denison Forward is a thoughtful, inclusive, and data-driven approach to understanding the road behind and carving a better path ahead. Among other recommendations, this action plan calls for increasing recruitment and retention of a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff; including antiracism as a part of professional development efforts; and making sure Denison students, particularly those who may face obstacles due to structural racism, have the resources and opportunities to launch into their chosen career paths.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Director of the Annual Fund will

- create, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive, multi-year plan to increase donors and dollars in support of the Denison Annual Fund, meeting annual revenue goals and strengthening alumni participation;
- successfully utilize the CRM (RENXT) and other advancement technologies to analyze data and evaluate trends to determine strategies and activities to assist in reaching goals;
- determine segmentation strategies to maximize response rates and revenue for each activity, leading to increased revenue and alumni participation;
- serve as the leader of the Denison Annual Fund team, providing advice, support, and guidance to staff and volunteers;
- evaluate staff and program performance on an ongoing basis;
- provide the framework for, and oversight to, goalsetting and benchmarking, recognition of volunteers and donors, events, volunteer recruitment, training and support, along with related activities of identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of donors;
- manage and direct the daily operations and overall strategy of the Denison Annual Fund;
- monitor progress toward annual and multi-year goals;
- evaluate and when applicable, execute new activities using new technologies, advanced customization for specific audiences, and enhanced digital strategies;
- engage in a continuous, systematic review and analysis of all Annual Fund activities to find ways to operate more effectively and efficiently;
- coordinate efforts closely with Major and Principal Gifts, Gift Planning, Alumni and Family Engagement, and other key partners in support of mutual goals;
- ensure \$1,000-and-above individuals are solicited personally by volunteers and staff, where appropriate;

- report, individually or with a volunteer, Annual Fund plans and progress at each meeting of the Institutional Advancement Committee of the Board of Trustees and of the Alumni Council, working with the Associate Vice President and Campaign Director;
- provide effective reporting and analyses to the Associate Vice President, volunteers, and colleagues for use in management decision making;
- solicit top-level annual giving prospects; and
- develop and manage the annual giving budget based on programmatic goals and objectives as reviewed and approved annually.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Billie Handa**

#### **Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement**

Billie earned her B.A. in global studies and M.Ed. in educational administration from Ohio University. She has worked as a professional fundraiser since 2006, starting with the American Cancer Society and working her way into higher education at Ohio University, where she served as the Director of Annual Giving. Billie came to Denison as Director of the Annual Fund in January 2017. In November of 2020, she was promoted to her current position of Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Campaign Manager. Billie is a first generation college graduate who loves working with the University's alumni, families, and friends in support of current and future Denison students.

### **Greg Bader**

#### **Vice President for Institutional Advancement**

Greg earned a B.S. in education from Bowling Green State University and holds a M.A. in higher education and student affairs from Ohio State University. As Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Greg leads the talented and seasoned institutional advancement team in continuing to advance strategies related to gift planning, stewardship, the Denison Annual Fund, the Office of Major Gifts, campaign planning and alumni relations efforts. Greg has worked in advancement for over 16 years and joined the Denison community in 2003. He previously managed student calling, young alumni programs, and both reunion and leadership giving.

## **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Denison University seeks a Director of the Annual Fund with

- a commitment to the mission of Denison University—to inspire and educate students to become autonomous thinkers, discerning moral agents, and active citizens of a democratic society;
- conversance in contemporary technologies and how they can be used in support of revenue generation and increased giving participation;
- excellent verbal and written communication skills;
- leadership, management, and supervisory skills and experience recruiting, managing, training, leading, and stewarding volunteer fundraising committees to reach their full potential and to achieve fundraising goals;
- excellent planning and budgetary management skills;
- experience in frontline solicitation;
- an ability to work with and communicate effectively as a member of a team collaborating across diverse populations;

- knowledge of modern data management practices and techniques including data-based computerized information systems, data modeling, and analyses that lead to effective decision making on behalf of the program;
- thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of higher education fundraising with an understanding of individual giving programs and a deep understanding of annual fundraising programs with both traditional and non-traditional activities; and
- experience with RENXT and/or other advancement technologies.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least five years of fundraising experience with a focus on direct marketing and annual giving.

#### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

Denison University offers a competitive salary and [comprehensive benefits](#).

#### **LOCATION**

This position is located in Granville, Ohio.

#### **COVID-19**

In its ongoing efforts to support the health of its community and continue to operate its campus safely, Denison University requires all new employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 including a booster within the timeline guidance recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention unless a Denison-authorized exemption is approved prior to the first date of employment. More information and resources regarding this policy as a condition of employment is provided [here](#).

#### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Denison University as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the prospectus.***

*To apply for this position, visit:*

[Director of the Annual Fund, Denison University.](#)

*To nominate a candidate, please contact Clare McCully, [claremccully@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:claremccully@aspenleadershipgroup.com) or Jeanette Rivera-Watts, [jeanetterw@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:jeanetterw@aspenleadershipgroup.com).*

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*